DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 347 842 FL 020 536

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TITLE Africa in the "New World Order": Old Assumptions, Myths, and Reality.
PUB DATE Mar 92
NOTE 38p.; Paper presented at the Annual Eastern Michigan University Conference on Languages and Communication for World Business and the Professions (11th, Ypsilanti, MI, March 25-28, 1992). Appendices have uneven type quality.
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Business Administration Education; *Cultural Awareness; *Cultural Differences; Cultural Traits; *Developing Nations; *Ethnic Bias; Foreign Countries; Global Approach; International Communication; *Multicultural Education; Professional Training; Racial Bias; *Stereotypes
IDENTIFIERS *Africa; New World Order

ABSTRACT

Old stereotypes and prejudices about Africa and Africans are addressed in this paper on globalizing the business curriculum and internationalizing the training of professionals. It is noted that Africa continues to suffer from a tradition of neglect that includes a historical, systematic exclusion from the rest of the world. Examples from the works of Western scholars and the media are cited that perpetuate the stereotypes and misunderstandings. Themes and objectives are presented that should underlie any teaching about Africa. They include the following: the distinction between myth and fact; all peoples have a significant past; all peoples must deal with similar basic problems; the importance of family and kinship in shaping a society's structure and character; characteristics of a society that are related to the physical environment; differing cultural patterns; and patterns of acceptable individual and group behavior and means for their enforcement. Instructional units are suggested. (LB)

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AFRICA IN THE "NEW WORLD ORDER": OLD ASSUMPTIONS, MYTHS, AND REALITY

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INTRODUCTION:

Almost three decades after the end of colonialism in most of Africa, old prejudices --with wide and comforting appeal-- continue to dominate popular thinking in many parts of the western world, particularly in the United States of America. Besides the patent falsehood and dehumanizing quality of such beliefs, they also prevent us from fostering meaningful international cooperation and mutually satisfying relationships between the west and Africa.

Besides President Bush who, in the wake of the demise of the Soviet Union, has recently taken up the crusade for "a new world order", there is also currently a lot of talk about "globalizing" the business curriculum and internationalizing the training of several professionals. A key element in this process is teaching about the social and cultural context in which business, or other professional contacts, take place.

In all these developments, two basic problems arise in respect of Africa. First, Africa generally continues to suffer from a tradition of neglect. And, second, even when the existence of Africa is finally recognized, the picture we get is one constructed on the basis of the same old stereotypes of Africa --stereotypes which, to begin with, had no basis in

reality. These are serious problems which make the task of "integrating" Africa into the "new world order" or including Africa in a globalized business curriculum doomed to failure from the very start.

To address the problem, we need first to identify those images of Africa and Africans which predominate in popular American thought. This would help us to determine who we are trying to integrate into the "new world order". Would it be the "savage" of the stereotypes or the real human being? Thereafter, we may consider not only what professionals and business people ought to know about Africa and Africans, but also how to go about delivering such information most effectively and efficiently.

AFRICA AND THE TRADITION OF NEGLECT:

One of the most surprising facts about Africa in the western, particularly American, world view is the virtual condemnation of the entire continent of more than 500 million people to irrelevance. Occasionally, particularly when they have been "bad boys" by demonstrating the "inherent depravity" of "those fanatically islamic Arabs," parts of northern Africa manage to escape this sentence. Similarly, the Republic of South Africa gets in the news especially when the rival Black political groups have had a physical engagement, thus demonstrating once again "the inherent inability of tribal Africans to govern themselves". For further evidence of this tradition of neglect,

we need in fact look no further than this conference: it has always focused on Europe, Asia, and Latin America. It is apparently such contemptuous treatment of Africa and Africans that prompted Susie M. Bocoum of the African Business Referral Association in San Francisco, California, to state that:

> It is a shame that a continent twice the size of America is being pushed into a corner and forgotten by Europe... While Europe is busy putting together the EEC, they will put Africa last. (1991: 12)

The situation is compounded by what goes on in the world of schools and academia. Several current reports or books on world issues, or geography, talk about the "U.S.A, Japan, India, China and Africa". The beginning of this systematic exclusion of Africa from the rest of the world --an exclusion made even more ironic by the theory that Africa is humanity's birthplace and, therefore, has the longest history of any of the world's continents-- is rooted in the historical tradition. The assumption That Africa is an historical void prevent us from studying how the human beings who have lived and continue to live in this "void" have adapted to "their particular environments, and how they perceive themselves and set their goals within those environments..." (Shaw 1987: 1).

For centuries Western scholars have prepared the grounds for this sidetracking of Africa in world affairs. For example, over a century ago, Hegel not only argued that Africa was not only "isolated" from the rest of the world, but that this physical

isolation denied it of the "blessings" of European "civilization", thus condemning the continent to "backwardness and barbarism". With the exception of Egypt, he believed that Africa had

> no historical interest of its own, for we find its inhabitants living in barbarism and savagery...From the earliest historical times, Africa has remained cut off from all contacts with the rest of the world; it is the land of gold, forever pressing it upon itself, and the land of childhood, removed from the light of self conscious history and wrapped in the dark mantle of night. Its isolation is not just a result of its tropical nature, but an essential consequence of the geographical nature. It is still unexplored, and has no connections whatsoever with Europe...In this main portion of Africa, history is in fact out of the question. (Hegel 1975: 155)

If we take a look at some of the comments of Ibn Batuta, the celebrated Muslim traveler (1304-1368/9) on the West African empire of Mali (1238-1468) --about four centuries before Hegel wrote his famous lines-- the patent falsehood of Hegel's statements becomes quite evident:

> ...Among the good qualities of these people we must cite the following:
>
> ...

> 2. The general and complete security that is enjoyed in the country. The traveler, just like the sedentary man, has nothing to fear of brigands, thieves, or plunderers.
>
> 3. the blacks do not confiscate the goods of white men who die in their country, even when these men possess immense treasures. On the contrary, the blacks deposit the goods with a man respected among the whites, until the individuals to whom the goods rightfully belong present themselves and take possession of them (qtd in Collins 1990: 22).

One wonders if such observations would hold true of anywhere in medieval Europe. Yet, these are Hegel's barbarians.

Old habits die hard, however. Thus, over a century after Hegel, the renowned British historian, Sir Hugh Trevor-Roper asserted in 1963 with all confidence that

> Perhaps in the future, there will be some African history to teach. But at the present there is none: there is only the history of Europeans in Africa. The rest is darkness.... And darkness is not a subject of history. (1963: 871)

Others have similarly referred to Africa as being "on the fringes" of the world, an area which in the mid nineteenth century "constituted by far the largest single barbarian reservoir left in the world", an area whose physical conditions largely helped to preserve "a degree of autonomy and cultural

independence for African barbarian and savage communities into the second half of the nineteenth century" (McNeill 1963: 480, 559, 724-5).

The importance of this historical excursion is that it explains how the stage was set for the neglect of Africa. If Africa has no history other than European history, then it makes sense that Africa be excluded from the news etc, except in so far as it has something to do with the West, which by and large, is the situation in world affairs today.

Here we are in 1992, and the same pattern of thought, or the lack thereof, about Africa continues in one form or the other. In fact, the neglect is often justified on the basis of "business" considerations, which is to say, that a region should only be of interest for its economic potential.

True enough, in the short term Europe, Asia and parts of Latin America may be undergoing a lot of changes, changes which warrant the extra focus. But, things are also happening in Africa. In the long term, Africa, it must be remembered, has a large population which is not about to disappear, and which represents a potentially rich market. This is the kind of thinking which the White House often echoes in explaining its China policy in the face of obvious significant human rights abuses, a fraction of which would have condemned most African countries to pariah status. The starting point for an ultimately mutually beneficial relationship is learning about one another,

something that cannot be achieved until we recognize each other's existence.

WESTERN/AMERICAN STEREOTYPES ABOUT AFRICA:

A second --and often more severe problem, concerns the age-old stereotypes of Africa and Africans on which vast numbers of Americans grew up and which are continually nurtured even in adulthood. Most have their genesis in earlier historical accounts written by Europeans --some of which have been illustrated-- the writing of misguided missionaries or colonial officials, television, the mass media, and Hollywood. Together, these groups, or institutions, have established an unholy alliance which is hard to break. Particularly in America, with the history of slavery and institutionalized racism, it has been easy to find succor in those racial stereotypes about Africa, to at least try to ease the conscience and rationalize a tradition and an attitude toward African-Americans that has been neither civilized, Christian nor rational.

More than anyone else, the television industry and Hollywood have been guilty fostering stereotypes. Think of the list of Hollywood movies, beginning with the Tarzan series, which defined and has continued to define Africa for a majority of Americans. Certainly, it is the source of the popular myth about the jungles of Africa --the rain forest that occupy less than 5 per cent of African land. Other more recent examples include **Out of Africa** (naturally focused on the feelings of the westerners), **Gorillas**

in the Mist (title speaks for itself), **The African Queen**, and, of course, **The Gods Must Be Crazy I & II**.

The naked dancers are never far behind, with the chattering and nattering of the half-clad savages, and the inevitable wild life, literally crawling all over the place. Even in Eddie Murphy's famous **Coming to America**, the half clad dancers are ubiquitous, women are second class citizens, and elephants stroll in the people's backyard. It is difficult to resist the temptation to lay a charge of institutionalized racism and ethnocentrism at Hollywood's doorsteps, particularly when one puts the facts here together with the stereotyped portrayal of African-Americans in Hollywood's movies.

Sadly, even the best that television has to offer, Public Television, usually falls into the same mode of thought. Virtually any segment of perhaps the best and most popular children's program, **Sesame Street**, that talks about Africa, shows you children who are ill-fed, scantily clothed, living in huts, and schooling in the most deplorable conditions. I am yet to see a city school or even a village school. Even though I went to elementary school over thirty years ago in a very small town in southwestern Nigeria, I never saw any school like those which are supposed to be the norm in 1992 Africa. Nor did my father who is now 85 ever live in a hut or go such a school, even though he lived in an even tinier town over seventy years ago!

Finally, popular television series like those by National Geographic always manages to find images of nomads, starving

children, "Pygmies", the Masai, etc., which are then held up as the image of Africa. It is much like pointing to the Amish and concluding that they represent (no pejorative meaning intended) America. We may also consider the impact of showing only the extremely poverty-stricken Mississippi Delta, the wooden shacks in the Ozarks, the worst of Chicago's slums, scenes or movies centered only on the homeless, drug addicts, drug wars, and KKK rallies as the image of America.

Writing on the prevalence these African stereotypes among American students, Richard Corby says:

> Stereotypes and myths about Africa still abound in American published materials and in the media. Some of these distortions are obvious to discerning readers, others are more difficult to detect. These stereotypes and myths contribute to the "Tarzan" image of Africa that many of our students develop about the continent and retain throughout their lifetimes. (1985 : 76)

Of course, it is not only the students who have such grave misconceptions --adults are often worse. A school teacher who participated in a University of Florida Summer Institute on African Studies program visited Ghana in 1977. Her summary of the concerns of people, both before and after her trip, are quite illuminating:

> Preceding my trip...quite a few intelligent adults revealed some of their erroneous perceptions of Africa by asking me questions and giving me advice based on

> their stereotyped views. They were (1) worried about my safety among the primitive tribes, (2) concerned that I might be treated by a "witchdoctor" in case of illness, (3) afraid I would be overcome by the heat of the jungles, (4) thinking I could be harmed by wild animals, and (5) wondering if I'd be threatened because of my belief in Christianity. ("How Americans View Africa," Miscellaneous publication of the Center for African Studies, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida)

Predictably, as she reported upon her return about the only wild animal she saw --a monkey in a short stretch of rain-forest, the modern airports, the busy city streets, the beautifully landscaped grounds of the university campuses, the lovely hotels, the people dressed in western style clothes, etc, her audience continuously queried her as if these reports "are not for real". Years of being schooled in stereotypes has built up in her audience an automatic attitude of disbelief in a positive image of Africa and Africans, even when backed up with factual evidence.

As one final example of the difficulty of teaching facts as opposed to stereotypes about Africa, consider the following account of the reporting of two interviews I granted last year to two newspapers in Statesboro, GA ---**The Statesboro Herald** and **the Eagle** (a student newspaper). The reporter for **The Eagle**, for example, sat in on an hour-long class of Yoruba, a Nigerian

language which I teach, and then had a further one and a half hours of one-on-one interview with me and was provided with written material on the language and the people. Nevertheless, in the published write-up, Yoruba was still called a "dialect" (as opposed to a language like English), Nigeria --and Africa in general-- is made of "tribes", and "all Yorubans [sic] greet each other formally; when their parents enter a room, children greet them by lying down on their stomachs". So, the children are like dogs, rolling over for their master's pleasure. In one instant, the ritual of prostrating or kneeling down to greet older people is more dramatically presented as a primitive, reprobate custom akin to treating children like groveling slaves. These virtually predictable errors certainly do suggest a definite mind set that somehow manages, not necessarily out of malice, not to hear, or recollect what is said.

A PRESENTATION OF THE AFRICAN EXPERIENCE:

Since the professionals and business people who constitute our target would obviously have limited time, we cannot approach their education the way we would, say, high school students. What we do may depend instead on whether we are doing a unit in a course in the business school on international business, or preparing executives or professionals about to leave for some African country either on a long- or short-term assignment.

Whatever our group, the task we face is two-fold: teaching facts about Africa and dealing with stereotypes.

The Themes and Teaching Objectives:

The major themes in African life which serve as the background that provides the unifying frame of reference for our program could be grouped into two broad categories: cultural themes and economic themes. Among the cultural themes are eating customs and types of foods, education, dress, family relationships (kinship), languages, and adaptation to environment. Economic themes include types of work, the nature of the political economy, standard of living/quality of life, leisure time, and adaptation to environment.

The central purpose of teaching about Africa then is to encourage participants to understand Africans (or indeed members of any other culture) as people like themselves, with a significant past and high aspirations, and who create and express themselves in a wide variety of ways, and struggle with the same basic problems as peoples everywhere. Specifically, they should understand:

1. the distinction between myth and fact about peoples.
2. that all peoples have a significant past.
3. that all peoples have to deal with similar basic problems: providing food, clothing and shelter.
4. the importance of family and kinship ties in shaping the character and structure of societies and in

determining the parameters of individual decision-making.

5. that many unique characteristics of a society are directly related to or dependent upon the physical environment within which culture develops.
6. that human societies perform similar functions but differ in the cultural patterns which they develop to accomplish these functions.
7. that every society develops patterns of acceptable individual and group behavior and provides means for their enforcement.

Clearly, this list is not exhaustive. But it does reflect the essential goal of preparing participants for meaningful and productive interaction with their target cultures.

Unit 1:

Perhaps the first lesson that needs to be taught is that Africa is made up of several countries and is not just one country. Therefore, regardless of similarities between different peoples, there are still essentially unique qualities. An up-to-date map of Africa is indispensable, particularly a language map, which helps to highlight the complexity and diversity of the continent. [See Appendix #1: Language Map of Africa].

One of the most useful ways of learning about Africa is to focus on a particular region or country of interest. Having selected the area, for example, West Africa, there should be a brief history of that region or country. Time lines can be

particularly useful here. Such an historical excursion, however brief, would help dispel the notion that there was no history before contact with Europeans, and will also help place in some perspective some of the issues that are topical in the political economy of Africa today.

Better still are fact sheets on specific countries. In fact, such fact sheets should be part of the business portfolio of executives and professionals who have cause to deal with any African country. [See Appendix #2: Fact Sheet on Nigeria].

Unit 2: Placing Differences in a Cultural Perspective:

A key element in this program is a unit that addresses the issue of placing differences in a cultural perspective. This is critical for Americans, especially, who despite espousing the ideals of self-determination and individualism somehow consistently manage to believe that anything that deviates from the "American norm" is "weird", "strange", "unchristian" or "downright wrong". And the judgements that are passed on all other cultures have particularly significant negative consequences. In this Unit we can deal with issues of religion, dressing, the arts, education, language and culture.

Names and naming practices, in particular, provide a very useful way of learning about African cultures. Every society in the world places value on names as a means of personal, family, and group identity. The names we give our children or the places

where we live reveal our feelings, our memories, our hopes. Nowhere is this truer that in Africa.

African names, because they are obviously often quite different from European ones, are often a source of "difficulty" for Americans. What do several people do when they confront these "funny" names? Probably, they refuse to say them or try to change them to "regular" names like "Bob" or "Sue". Yet, Americans will pronounce Polish names that apparently lack vowels. It seems like a mental block simply rises up when it comes to "those Africans". Finding out the meaning of an African's name is a good way to open a conversation, and you may also learn a whole lot more about the kind of person with whom you are dealing.

African names reflect a system which is very well-ordered and complex. [See Appendix #3: African Names]. The group or class might use the naming chart (the perpetual calendar) or in fact try to celebrate a naming ceremony.

Also very useful for developing the ability to place differences in a cultural perspective is the exercise in Appendix # 4: Body Ritual Among the Nacirema.

Unit 3: Combating Stereotypes:

This unit should receive a great deal of emphasis. As noted earlier, the stereotypes about Africa and Africans are many and varied. The first step in combating stereotypes is to identify them. In this regard the participants themselves can tap into their own ideas about Africa and Africans. The coordinator may

simply ask students to list words, or ideas, that come to their mind as they think about Africa. The Gainesville Questionnaire can also be used to generate lists. [See Appendix # 5: African Images; and Appendix 6: Some Stereotypes of Africa; and Appendix #7: "Buzz Words" that Contribute to a "Tarzan" Image of Africa]. It would also be useful to think of how participants would define similar phenomena in their own cultures. The words we use to define others are also an indirect way of defining ourselves --of course, normally in the positive light. (See Francois' list).

Movie clips and slides showing a mixture of scenes from African countries as well as America may be presented to students. The task of students is to identify the location of the scenes. such an exercise will usually reveal a lot of the stereotypes that participants harbor about Africa.

CONCLUSION:

How much can we hope to achieve in the course of a program that may last no longer than anything from a two-day workshop to, perhaps, one week? It may seem not a lot. But the central aim should be to stimulate participants into looking at their potential clients as people, as real human beings. For most participants, there will be enough information in that short period to make them wish to know more and to adopt an attitude of caution in passing judgements about other peoples and cultures.

Learning the truth about others is not a luxury. it a both a spiritual and pragmatic necessity for us as members of the human community on the eve of the twenty-first century. No race or continent is about to disappear for the convenience of another. In fact, if anything, we see our world literally shrinking as we become increasingly inter-dependent economically and otherwise. Knowledge of the truth about others rather than an ostrich-like clinging to old myths and stereotypes is central to our success. Today, Africa may not be on the center stage of world economic activity, but we must learn to look ahead and prepare for the future which is inevitable.

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AFRICA IN THE "NEW WORLD ORDER": OLD ASSUMPTIONS, MYTHS, AND REALITY

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APPENDIX # 1: AFRICAN COUNTRIES: OFFICIAL + (WIDELY-SPOKEN) LANGUAGES

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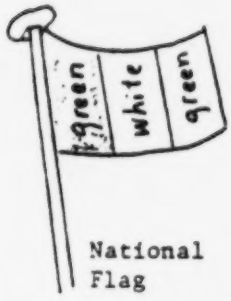
APPENDIX #2

(This Fact Sheet is a modified and updated version of material originally prepared by the African Studies Program of the University of Illinois.)

FACT SHEET

on

N I G E R I A



National Flag

Independence Date: October 1, 1960

Pre-Independence Status: British colony

Head of State: Ibrahim Babangida

Political Parties:

1. Social Democratic Party (SDP)
2. National Republican Convention (NRC)

(Green represents agriculture; white, unity & peace)

National Anthem: "Arise, O compatriots"

Type of Government: Military rule established December 31, 1983 by an army coup which ousted the civilian government elected in 1979. 2nd coup 8/85.

States: Anambra, Bauchi, Bendel, Benue, Borno, Cross River, Gongola , Imo, Kaduna, Kano, Kwara, Lagos, Niger, Ogun, Ondo, Oyo, Rivers, Plateau, Sokoto. (11 new states, including Osun, Kogi, Edo, Delta, Katsina, and Akwa-Ibom, have been created, bringing the total to 30)

Capital City: ABUJA (new capital since late 1991)
Former Capital: Lagos (pop.: + 6m)

Other Major Cities (With population): Ikeja, Ibadan (+4m), Kano (+2m) Maiduguri (+200000), Sokoto (+300000), Kaduna (+200000), Jos (+300000), Ilorin (+800000), Enugu (+700000), Aba (+500000), Port Harcourt (+600000), Calabar (+450000), Benin (+600000), Ogbomosho (+850000), Ile-Ife (+300000), Abeokuta (+400000), Onitsha (+700000), Bauchi, Yola, Owerri, Akure, Minna, Warri, Sapele.
(Figures rounded to nearest thousand.)

Total Population: 120,000,000. (Source: UNESCO 1987)).

Size: 357,000 square miles (924,625 square kilometers)

Major Languages: English (official), Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba (national), Fulani, Edo, etc

Universities: Ahmadu Bello University, University of Benin, University of Ibadan, University of Ile-Ife, University of Lagos, University of Calabar, University of Jos, University of Maiduguri, University of Nsukka, University of Sokoto plus at least state universities, some universities of technology and several colle

Climate: Tropical on the coast to sub-tropical in northern area. Two seasons:

1. Dry season, November-April, shorter in the south
2. Rainy season, May-October, with a break in August to early September in the far north. The average maximum varies from 35°C in the north to 31°C south.

Production for Domestic Use: Animal husbandry (mainly cattle), fishing, small farming (cassava, yams, plantains, rice, beans, sugar cane, peanuts)

Major Exports: Oil (91%), cocoa (3%), palm products, tin, coal, columbite, rubber, cotton, gold, iron ore, limestone. (Second largest oil supplier to U.S.)

Other Industries, Sources of Income: Agriculture, manufacturing, natural gas, hydropower, livestock, fisheries

Money: Naira (₦) and Kobo (K). Exchange rates fluctuate.
1₦ = $0.10 as of January 1991.
1₦ = 100K (Bank notes issues in denominations of 50K, ₦1, ₦5, ₦10, ₦20.
Coins: 1½K, 1K, 5K, 10K, 25K)

Budget

1. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) 1983, est. $65 billion
2. Per Capita GDP $720
3. Average inflation (1982-83): 25%
4. Balance of Trade:
   Export, $11.7 billion (petroleum 95%, columbite, cocoa, rubber)
   Import, $13 billion (transport equipment, foodstuffs, machinery)
5. Budget, 1984: $13.4 billion
   Allocations:
   Defense 9.3%

(Sources: U.S. State Dept. Background Notes: Nigeria 9/84)

Major Religions: Traditional belief systems (? million persons) Muslims (+26 m); Christians (+19m)

Public Holidays: January 1, New Years; October 1, Independence Day; December 25, Christmas; December 26, Boxing Day. Dates for other Christian holidays (Easter, Good Friday) and Muslim holidays (Id-el-Maulud, Id-el-Fitri, Id-el-Kabir) vary from year to year.

Main Newspapers:
Daily Times (circulation 125,000); Daily Sketch (50,000); New Nigerian (+80,000) Nigerian Tribune (50,000); Renaissance (50,000); Nigerian Observer (40,000); West African Pilot (35,000); Daily Express (31,000)

Education/National Youth Service:

Universal free primary education began in 1976. 6 years compulsory attendance (primary) Literacy 45-50%. All college & university graduate are required to give a year to National Youth Service, working at projects which benefit the country. Teacher/Student Ratio: 1/140.

Brief History:

Nigeria, considered a crossroads of Africa in ancient times, derived its name from the river Niger (Niger-Area) which crosses the country from northwest to

south. Principal groups in the country today are: in the north, Fulani, Hausa, Kanuri, Nupe and Tiv; in the south, Annang (Edo, or Bini), Ibibio, Igbo, Ijaw, Isekiri, Urhobo and Yoruba. On the plateau in central Nigeria and eastwards are located hundreds of separate language groups, one of the most complex linguistic areas in the entire continent.

While much of the early history is still missing, archaeological discoveries at the village of Nok in northern Nigeria give evidence of a highly developed iron-working agricultural civilization, "Nok culture", in this area at least by around 300 B.C. Long before the coming of the first foreigners (Portuguese) in the 15th century, there were a number of powerful organized states, e.g. the Hausa states of Kano, Katsina and Zazzau (Zaria) and the Yoruba city states further south: Ife, Benin, Oyo. Ife and Benin are particularly well known for producing some of the world's greatest art, especially bronze and terracotta sculptures, which also reveals much about their ancient past. Oyo, at first small compared with Benin, began to expand in the 16th century, partly through economic impetus provided by the Atlantic slave trade, until by the 17th century it was the most powerful state on the coast. The history of the lesser known kingdoms of Nupe and smaller groups like the Igbo-Okwu (which lived for the most part in independent groups of villages, without kings) is also recorded mostly through art, including some of Africa's finest works in bronze. In this era of pre-European contact the states in what is now northern Nigeria were in regular touch with Mediterranean commerce and states like Borno conducted diplomatic correspondence with the Ottoman Empire (which sent a military assistance mission to Borno in the 17th century). By the 16th century Islam had penetrated most of the north.

Trade of goods, begun with Europeans, developed in the 16th century into slave trading, increased greatly in the 17th century with the demand for plantation workers in the Americas, and continued until the abolition of slave trade in the 1880's. Power struggles among the states, aggravated by the slave trade, resulted in disintegration, civil strife, and foreign alliances, leading eventually to British colonial rule. Yet during the 19th century, in the north of Nigeria where the majority of the country's population resides, a series of holy wars established one of the largest Islamic states sub-Saharan Africa has yet seen.

Nigeria was conquered by Britain in several stages, beginning with the annexing of Lagos, mainly as a trading center, in 1861. The 1884 conference which partitioned Africa among European powers, assigned the area now known as Nigeria to Britain. There were a number of experiments involving traditional rulers and other local representatives ("indirect rule") in the colonial government, with varying degrees of success. The overall effect of colonial rule produced many Western-educated Nigerians but also deep resentment at the inequities of the colonial economic and political situation. The first constitution in 1947 was prepared by the British without any consultation with Nigerians, but the emergence of political parties, begun with Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe's National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) led eventually to self-government and independence from Britain. Nigeria was declared independent in 1960 with Dr. Azikiwe as President and Sir Tafawa Balewa (leader of the majority party) as Prime Minister.

In 1966 the government was overthrown by the army in a bloody coup when Igbo army officers seized control of the government. All the leaders were killed

and a military regime established. A civil war (known outside as the Biafra War because of the attempt of the eastern part of the country to establish a separate country, "Biafra") continued until 1970, when the federal government under the leadership of General Yakubu Gowon again gained control. The military regime continued under General Gowon's successor, General Murtala Muhammed, and then under the leadership of General Obiosegun Obasanjo--who came to power in 1976--the country moved toward unification and civilian rule. On October 1, 1979, national elections resulted in a new civilian government headed by President Alhaji Shehu Shagari, leading the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) to power. The new constitution adopted at that time, similar to the constitution of the United States, divided the Federation into 19 states. However, the civilian government was ousted in a coup on December 31, 1983, returning Nigeria to military rule under Major General Buhari. In a second coup, on August 27, 1985, Buhari was replaced by Ibrahim Babangida.

Some Useful Phrases in Local Languages:

(English)	(Hausa)	(Igbo)	(Yoruba)
Hello	Sannu* (sä-nö)	Kedu* (ke-dö)	E karo (e ká-ro)
Thank you	Na gode (nä go-de)	Dalu (dá-lö)	A dupe (á-dö-pe)
Goodbye	Sai wata rana (sä-i wä-tä rä-nä)	Komesi (ko-me-sē)	O dabo (o dä-bo)

*Approximations only; African greetings vary greatly with time of day, etc.

Nigerian Representatives in the U.S.

Embassy of Nigeria, 2201 M St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, 202/223-9300
Nigerian Consulate, 575 Lexington Ave., New York, N.Y. 1022 212/752-1670

Other Resources on Nigeria Available from the Center for African Studies:

Outreach handbooks (order list available):
African Names: People & Places, Good Tastes in Africa, African Games of Strategy, Religions in Africa

Other items in this collection (see index):
"The Cultural Content of Chinua Achebe's Novels"
"The Kola Nut in Traditional Igbo Society
"Nigerian Folk Tales Told by Peter Asun"
"The Oil Palm in West Africa"

Audiovisual Materials (Order film & Africa film catalog from U. of Ill. Film Center
(f = film; s = slides)
Benin Kingship Ritual (f and s)
The Bend of the Niger (f)
A Day with Three Nigerian Second Graders
Everyday Life in Nigeria (s)
Innovative African Artists (s)
Music of Africa (f)
Nigeria: A Short Introduction (s)
West African Dress (s)
West African Occupations: Musicians and Craftsmen (s)
Yoruba Pottery (s)

Bibliographies (see index) in this collection, especially:

"African Resources for Language Arts"
"Biographies and Writings of Famous African Men and Women"
"Curriculum Units, 7-12"

APPENDIX # 3: AFRICAN NAMES

A. What Names Tell You:

1. place/ethnic or language group
2. the time /circumstances of a person's birth
3. family relationships
4. occupations
5. historical events
6. religious beliefs
7. values and aspirations.

B. Categories and Choices: family/surnames, personal names given at birth, and names acquired later in life.

1. Family/Surnames:

Wolof (Senegal, Gambia):

Diop --traditional chiefs of Dakar
Ndiaye --descendants of Bourba Djollof or Diada, twelfth century king.
Thiam --family of smiths, jewelers, artisans.

2. Personal Names:
They are generally more important than family/surnames -- which in many instances are foreign adoptions. (But among others such as the Gikuyu (Kenya) and the Wolof (Senegal) and the Mandinka, it is of considerable importance)

Traditionally, there is no distinction between First and Middle names.

Factors Which Determine Personal Names:

--weekday/market day of birth
--time of day
--special circumstances
--special day in community calendar
--child's ranking relative to other siblings
--whether the child is a twin/born after twins
--importance/hopes/aspirations child holds for parents
--parents' religious/philosophical views.

a. Day Names:

Akan (Ghana): Kofi/Efua(female) --Friday's child (meaning "growth")

Igbo (Nigeria): **Nwankwo --Nwa (male prefix) + nkwo (first/fifth market day).**

b. Time & Circumstances:

Country	Ethnic Grp/lang.	Name	Meaning
Kenya	Abaluyia	Wamalwa	Born at a beer party
Nigeria	Yorùbá	Béjidé	Born during the rainy season
Rwanda	Watutsi	Mukamtagara	Born in time of war

c. Positional Names:

Tanzania	Swahili	Mosi (m/f)	First-born
Nigeria	Yorùbá	Dèjì (2)	Second-born

d. Twin Names:

Nigeria	Yorùbá	Táíwò (m/f)	Number one
		Kẹ̀hìndé (m/f)	Number two
		Ìdòwú (m/f)	Born after twins
		Àlàbá	Born after Ìdòwú
Mali	Malinka	Seni	Number one
		Sine	Number two

e. Descriptive Names (physical characteristics, personality traits, unusual circumstances of actual delivery):

Nigeria	Yorùbá	Dàda (m)	Child with curly hair ("rasta or dread locks")
		Ìgè (m)	born with feet first
Zaire	Luba	Munene	Big One
Nigeria	Igbo	Ngozi (f)	Blessing
	Yorùbá	Ìgbẹ́kòyí	Even the forest has rejected this one
Mali	Fulani	Guedado	Wanted by no one
S. Africa	Xhosa	Thandiwe	Beloved
Ethiopia	Amhara	Hagos (m)	Joy

f. Names to Live up to:

Tanzania	Hehe	Mkawawa (m)	Conqueror
	Hehe	Mulelwa	One who is well brought up
Nigeria	Yorùbá	Dúrósinmí	Don't die before me

g. **Religious Names**

Names for God/Supreme Being are often part of such names ; **Nyama** (Akan of Ghana); **Chukwu/Chi** (Igbo, Nigeria); **Ọlọ́run/Olúwa** (Yorùbá, Nigeria); **Nzambi** (the Luba, Lulua, etc. in Zaire and Zambia).

Ghana	Akan	**Nyamekye (m)**	**God's gift**
Nigeria	Igbo	**Chike (m)**	**Power of God**
	Yorùbá	**Ọlọ́runfẹ́mi**	**God loves me**
		Ọrẹ́olúwa	**God's gift**
Rwanda	Tutsi	**Wimáma (m)**	**Belongs to God**

3. **The Naming Ceremony**

<u>Symbolic Elements</u>

A. **The Essentials of Life:**

--salt (essential for "life")
--pepper (a spice of "life")
--honey ("sweetness" in life)

B. **The Connection Between Earth and Heaven:**

--gestures (lifting the baby to the sky, touching the earth with the baby's bare feet, etc.)
--water (an element)
--pouring libation on the earth

C. **Link Between the Ancestors and the Living:**

--palm wine, etc. (for libation and shared as a toast)
--animal sacrifice (sheep or goat) ritually offered to the ancestors, then shared.
--kolanut (a token of good wishes).

Prepared for African Curriculum Workshop for Public School Teachers, African Studies Program, University of Illinois, under a grant from The National Endowment for the Humanities.

University of Massachusetts/Worcester Teacher Corps: African Studies Handbook for Elementary and Secondary School Teachers offers the following lesson on the study of "other" people:

STUDENT STUDY SHEET FOR "BODY RITUAL AMONG THE NACIREMA"*

1. The anthropologist has become so familiar with the diversity of ways in which different peoples behave in similar situations that he is not apt to be surprised by even the most exotic customs. In fact, if all of the logically possible combinations of behavior have not been found somewhere in the world, he is apt to suspect that they must be present in some yet undescribed tribe.....In this light the magical beliefs and practices of the Nacirema present such unusual aspects that it seems desirable to describe them as an example of the extremes to which human behavior can go.....

2. Nacirema culture is characterized by a highly developed market economy which has evolved in a rich natural habitat. While much of the people's time is devoted to economic pursuits, a large part of the fruits of these labors and a considerable portion of the day are spent in ritual activity. The focus of this activity is the human body, the appearance and health of which loom as a dominant concern in the ethos of the people. While such a concern is certainly not unusual, its ceremonial aspects and associated philosophy are unique.

3. The fundamental belief underlying the whole system appears to be that the human body is ugly and that its natural tendency is to debility and disease. Incarcerated in such a body, man's only hope is to avert these characteristics through the use of powerful influences of ritual and ceremony. Every household has one or more shrines devoted to this purpose. The more powerful individuals in the society have several shrines in their houses and, in fact, the opulence of a house is often referred to in terms of the number of such ritual shrines it possesses. Most houses are of wattle and daub construction, but the shrine rooms of the more wealthy are walled with stone. Poorer families imitate the rich by applying pottery plaques to their shrine walls...

4. The focal point of the shrine is a box or chest which is built into the wall. In this chest are kept the many charms and magical potions without which no native believes he could live. These preparations are secured from a variety of specialized practitioners. The most powerful of these are the medicine men, whose assistance must be rewarded with substantial gifts. However, the medicine men do not provide the curative potions for their clients, but decide what the ingredients should be and then write them down in an ancient and secret language. This writing is understood only by the medicine men and by the herbalists who, for another gift, provide the required charm.

*From "Body Ritual Among the Nacirema" by Horace Miner from American Anthropologist, Vol. 58, 1956, p. 503-07, also available from the Bobbs-Merrill Reprint Series #S185 for 5.25

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Years					Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	1885	-	1925	1953	4	0	0	3	5	1	3	6	2	4	0	2
-	1886	-	1926	1954	5	1	1	4	6	2	4	0	3	5	1	3
-	1887	-	1927	1955	6	2	2	5	0	3	5	1	4	6	2	4
1860	1888	-	1928	1956	0	3	4	0	2	5	0	3	6	1	4	6
1861	1889	1901	1929	1957	2	5	5	1	3	6	1	4	0	2	5	0
1862	1890	1902	1930	1958	3	6	6	2	4	0	2	5	1	3	6	1
1863	1891	1903	1931	1959	4	0	0	3	5	1	3	6	2	4	0	2
1864	1892	1904	1932	1960	5	1	2	5	0	3	5	1	4	6	2	4
1865	1893	1905	1933	1961	0	3	3	6	1	4	6	2	5	0	3	5
1866	1894	1906	1934	1962	1	4	4	0	2	5	0	3	6	1	4	6
1867	1895	1907	1935	1963	2	5	5	1	3	6	1	4	0	2	5	0
1868	1896	1908	1936	1964	3	6	0	3	5	1	3	6	1	4	0	2
1869	1897	1909	1937	1965	5	1	1	4	6	2	4	0	3	5	1	3
1870	1898	1910	1938	1966	6	2	2	5	0	3	5	1	4	6	2	4
1871	1899	1911	1939	1967	0	3	3	6	1	4	6	2	5	0	3	5
1872	-	1912	1940	1968	1	4	5	1	3	6	1	4	0	2	5	0
1873	-	1913	1941	1969	3	6	6	2	4	0	2	5	1	3	6	1
1874	-	1914	1942	1970	4	0	0	3	5	1	3	6	2	4	0	2
1875	-	1915	1943	1971	5	1	1	4	6	2	4	0	3	5	1	3
1876	-	1916	1944	1972	6	2	3	6	1	4	6	2	5	0	3	5
1877	1900	1917	1945	1973	1	4	4	0	2	5	0	3	6	1	4	6
1878	-	1918	1946	1974	2	5	5	1	3	6	1	4	0	2	5	0
1879	-	1919	1947	1975	3	6	6	2	4	0	2	5	1	3	6	1
1880	-	1920	1948	1976	4	0	1	4	6	2	4	0	3	5	1	3
1881	-	1921	1949	1977	6	2	2	5	0	3	5	1	4	6	2	4
1882	-	1922	1950	1978	0	3	3	6	1	4	6	2	5	0	3	5
1883	-	1923	1951	1979	1	4	4	0	2	5	0	3	6	1	4	6
1884	-	1924	1952	1980	2	5	6	2	4	0	2	5	1	3	6	1

Days			Names: Girls	Names: Boys
Sunday	1		Akosua	Kwasi
Monday	2		Adwoa	Kojo
Tuesday	3		Abenaa	Kobina
Wednesday	4		Akua	Kweku
Thursday	5		Yaa	Yaw
Friday	6		Efua	Kofi
Saturday	7		Amma	Kwame
Sun.	8	29	Akosua	Kwasi
Mon.	9	30	Adwoa	Kojo
Tues.	10	31	Abenaa	Kobina
Wed.	11	32	Akua	Kweku
Thurs.	12	33	Yaa	Yaw
Fri.	13	34	Efua	Kofi
Sat.	14	35	Amma	Kwame
Sun.	15	36	Akosua	Kwasi
Mon.	16	37	Adwoa	Kojo
Tues.	17		Abenaa	Kobina
Wed.	18		Akua	Kweku
Thurs.	19		Yaa	Yaw
Fri.	20		Efua	Kofi
Sat.	21		Amma	Kwame
Sun.	22		Akosua	Kwasi
Mon.	23		Adwoa	Kojo
Tues.	24		Abenaa	Kobina
Wed.	25		Akua	Kweku
Thurs.	26		Yaa	Yaw
Fri.	27		Efua	Kofi
Sat.	28		Amma	Kwame

1. Find number that corresponds to the year and month of your birthday.
2. Add this number to day of month you were born.
3. The total will show the day of week you were born and your Ghanaian name from Africa.

5. The charm is not disposed of after it has served its purpose, but is placed in the charm-box of the household shrine. As these magical materials are specific for certain ills, and the real or imagined maladies of the people are many, the charm-box is usually full to overflowing. The magical packets are so numerous that people forget what their purposes were and fear to use them again. While the natives are very vague on this point, we can only assume that the idea in retaining all the old magical materials is that their presence in the charm-box, before which the body rituals are conducted, will in some way protect the worshipper.

6. Beneath the charm-box is a small font. Each day every member of the family, in succession, enters the shrine room, bows his head before the charm-box, mingles different sorts of holy water in the font, and proceeds with a brief rite of ablution. The holy waters are secured from the Water Temple of the community, where the priests conduct elaborate ceremonies to make the liquid ritually pure.

7. In the hierarchy of magical practitioners, and below the medicine men in prestige are specialists whose designation is best translated "holy-mouth-men." The Nacirema have an almost pathological horror of and fascination with the mouth, the condition of which is believed to have a supernatural influence on all social relationships. Were it not for the rituals of the mouth, they believe their teeth would fall out, their gums bleed, their jaws shrink, their friends desert them, and their lovers reject them. They also believe that a strong relationship exists between oral and moral characteristics. For example, there is a ritual ablution of the mouth for children which is supposed to improve their moral fiber.

8. The daily body ritual performed by everyone includes a mouth-rite. Despite the fact that these people are so punctilious about care of the mouth, this rite involves a practice which strikes the uninitiated stranger as revolting. It was reported to me that the ritual consists of inserting a small bundle of hog hairs into the mouth, along with certain magical powders, and then moving the bundle in a highly formalized series of gestures.

9. In addition to the private mouth-rite, the people seek out a holy-mouth-man once or twice a year. These practitioners have an impressive set of paraphernalia, consisting of a variety of augers, awls, probes, and prods. The use of these objects in the exorcism of the evils of the mouth involves unbelievable ritual torture of the client. The holy-mouth-man opens the client's mouth and, using the above mentioned tools, enlarges any holes which decay may have created in the teeth. Magical materials are put into these holes. If there are not naturally occurring holes in the teeth, large sections of one or more teeth are gouged out so that the super-natural substance can be applied. In the client's view, the purpose of these ministrations is to arrest decay and to draw friends. The extremely sacred and traditional character of the rite is evident in the fact that the natives return to the holy-mouth-man year after year, despite the fact that their teeth continue to decay.

10. It is hoped that, when a thorough study of the Nacirema is made, there will be careful inquiry into the personality structure of these people. One has but to watch the gleam in the eye of a holy-mouth-man, as he jabs an awl into an exposed nerve, to suspect that a certain amount of sadism is involved. If this can be established, a very interesting pattern emerges, for most of the population shows definite masochistic tendencies. It was to these that Professor Linton referred in discussing a distinctive part of the daily body ritual which is performed only by men. This part involves scraping and lacerating the surface of the face with a sharp instrument. Special women's rites are performed only four times during each

lunar month, but what they lack in frequency is made up in barbarity. As part of this ceremony, women bake their heads in small ovens for about an hour. The theoretically interesting point is that what seems to be a preponderantly masochistic people have developed sadistic specialists...

11. Our review of the ritual life of the Nacirema has certainly shown them to be a magic-ridden people. It is hard to understand how they have managed to exist so long under the burdens which they have imposed upon themselves. But even such exotic customs as these take on real meanings when they are viewed with the insight provided by Malinowski when he wrote (1948-70):

> Looking from far and above, from our high places of safety in the developed civilization, it is easy to see all the crudity and irrelevance of magic. But without its power and guidance early man could not have mastered his practical difficulties as he has done, nor could man have advanced to the higher stages of civilization.

Vocabulary Check

You are to have a clear understanding of the following words, that is, you are to be able to define them in your own words and use them in sentences so that from your sentence the word's meaning is absolutely clear.

ANTHROPOLOGIST
EXOTIC
RITUAL
SHRINE
OPULENCE
RITE
NATIVE
POTION
MEDICINE MAN
HERBALIST
PRACTITIONER
CHARM
BARBARITY
FONT
ABLUTION
PUNCTILIOUS
FORMALIZED
PARAPHERNALIA
AUGER
AWL
EXORCISM
SUPERNATURAL
SADISM
MASOCHISTIC
LACERATE
PREPONDERANTLY
PATHOLOGICAL

Comprehension Questions

1. Who are the Nacirema?
2. What is the fundamental belief underlying their whole philosophy?
3. How do we know their shrines are important to them?
4. What does a Holy-Mouth-Man do?
5. Are the Nacirema, in your opinion, at a higher or lower "stage of civilization"? Explain why in detail.

Each of us has images of what we expect Africa and Africans to be like. How accurate are these images? How much variance is there within your classroom groups? The following statements can lead you toward some answers.

(Circle the response you prefer following each statement)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. All Africans are black.	++	+	-	--
2. Africa is the largest continent.	++	+	-	--
3. Africa is poor in natural resources.	++	+	-	--
4. Africans are very intelligent.	++	+	-	--
5. Africans are very athletic.	++	+	-	--
6. Africans tend to be tall.	++	+	-	--
7. Africa is mostly covered by jungle.	++	+	-	--
8. Africa is mostly covered by desert.	++	+	-	--
9. Africa has heavy torrential rainfall.	++	+	-	--
10. Africa has no snow.	++	+	-	--
11. Africans are mostly hunters.	++	+	-	--
12. Africa lacks modern cities.	++	+	-	--
13. African art is primitive.	++	+	-	--
14. African music is modern.	++	+	-	--
15. African males have several wives.	++	+	-	--
16. African children attend schools.	++	+	-	--
17. African females tend gardens.	++	+	-	--
18. Africa has active volcanoes.	++	+	-	--
19. Africans practice witchcraft.	++	+	-	--
20. Africans earn less than Europeans.	++	+	-	--
21. Africans are often scientists.	++	+	-	--
22. African architecture is unusual.	++	+	-	--
23. Africans are largely Christian.	++	+	-	--
24. Africans are largely Muslim.	++	+	-	--
25. African values differ from non-African values.	++	+	-	--

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AFRICAN STEREOTYPES: A POLL

What is a stereotype?

Who doesn't have them?

How can they be changed?

You, of course, are largely free of stereotypes. What about other people? They are a different matter. Some of them are even prejudiced, the victims of strong negative stereotypes.

Conduct a poll to find out what stereotypes about Africa are around. Here are several ways of going about it. Use any one or all and then report back to class your findings.

SUGGESTED POLLING TECHNIQUES

1. Ask 100 people, "What first comes to mind when you hear the word *Africa*?"

2. List 10 positive statements about Africa and Africans. Ask 10 people to "agree" or "disagree" with each one.

3. Present 20 people with an outline map of the world. Ask them to rate each continent in terms of how much they would like to live there. Use a scale from 1 to 5. First preference is labeled 1. Number 5 is the least preferred place to live. How does Africa fare among your sample population?

4. Ask 20 people to list the 5 most important products of Africa.

5. Suggest to 10 people that the United Nations headquarters might be moved from New York City to Africa. Record their responses.

Through these activities have you identified any repeating African stereotypes? What are they? Are the same stereotypes held by people of all ages? All skin colors? All religions? All income levels? All occupational levels? Both sexes? How, if at all, do African stereotypes differ among the people whom you have polled?

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APPENDIX # 6

Some stereotypes of Africa to Shatter

(Francois Manchuele, GSU)(modified by G-P)

(From Leonard S. Kenworthy, Studying Africa in Elementary and Secondary Schools (New York: Teachers' College Press, Teachers' College, Columbia University, 1970)

That Africa is a country--rather than a continent of over fifty nations and territories.

That Africa is composed of deserts and jungles--even though deserts are limited to the Sahara and Kalahari and despite the fact that the jungle area is relatively small.

That Africa is filled with wild animals--when there are large areas where there are practically no animals, owing to the work of the tsetse fly and/or the pressures of population, and other parts of Africa where animals are being protected for fear they will become extinct.

That the countries of Africa are rich in minerals--despite the fact that some have no minerals or very few such resources.

That Africa is a hot and humid part of the world--even though much of it is plateau country with a moderate climate.

That the people are naked, drum-beating savages--when current interpretations of even the much-maligned pygmies (Twa) give us a picture of a "harmless people" with many qualities to be coveted by modern man and when there are thousands of Africans today who are well educated in the Western sense of that term.

That Africans are either "natives" or Europeans--although there are thousands of Asians, especially in East and South Africa and thousands of Middle Easterners, especially in West Africa.

That all Africans live in small tribes--despite the fact that many Africans have no sense today of belonging to a tribe and that many tribes are quite large (7 million Fulani, 15 million Ibo, and 22 million Yoruba in Nigeria) [the name "tribe" to refer to such groups--one could add the Hausa, 25 million or more people, and the Mande, 15 million or more people--is actually ridiculous, and should be replaced by the more accurate "ethnic group" or simply by the neutral "people". Note by F.M.]

That everyone lives in a village--when actually many people, especially in East Africa, have not lived in a village for centuries but on small plots of land, and when hundreds of thousands of persons live in large cities like Ibadan, with a population

of 700,000 in the city itself and 900,000 in the metropolitan area. [Today in 1991 about a third or more of Africans live in cities or urban areas. Note F.M.]

That Africa has no history and has never had any advanced civilization--when the truth is that the oldest human skeleton ever found was uncovered recently in Tanzania and that there were several well-advanced centers of civilization, such as the empires of Ghana and Songhai, as well as Egypt.

That Africans all live under one type of tribal government--when there are and have been a great variety of forms of government and wide differences even in the tribal form of government. [The expression "tribal form of government" should not in fact be used, because there are or have been no such forms of government in precolonial Africa, but segmentary stateless societies, secret societies, etc.--which have nothing to do with "tribal government". Note F.M.]

That there are great racial problems everywhere in Africa--when actually in many parts of the continent this has not been the case. (...)[There are today serious racial problems only in the Republic of South Africa, where a large group of settlers of European descent has monopolized all political and economical power. F.M.]

That there is no industrialization in Africa--whereas there has been some in the past and there is an increasing amount today in many parts of the continent, from textile factories and oil refineries to meat-packing plants, cement factories, and copper smelters.

That Africans create only grass skirts and drum music--when for centuries there have been Africans who have irrigated their land and created works of beauty ranging from the famous Ife and Benin bronzes to the Nigerian leather work which has been erroneously called "Moroccan leather" and when there are today many persons creating everything from indigenous literature to remarkable paintings and pieces of sculptures.